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Message Text

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ACTION AF-18

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ISO-00 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-11 INR-10

LAB-06 NSAE-00 RSC-01 SIL-01 SPC-03 AID-20 NSC-07

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PRS-01 USIA-15 DRC-01 /157 W
---------- 023476
R 071814Z MAR 74
FM AMEMBASSY LONDON
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8520
INFO AMEMBASSY PRETORIA
AMCONSUL JOHANNESBURG

UNCLAS LONDON 02955

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: ELAB, UK, SF
SUBJECT: PARLIAMENTARY SELECT COMMITTEE REPORT ON LABOR PRACTICES IN SOUTH AFRICA

REF: PRETORIA 0931

1. LONDON NEWSPAPERS MARCH 7 CARRIED ARTICLES ON REPORT OF PARLIAMENTARY SELECT COMMITTEE REPORT ON LABOR PRACTICES IN SOUTH AFRICA. GUARDIAN HAS AN EXTENSIVE SUMMARY BY ADAM RAPHAEL, COPY OF WHICH BEING POUCHED PRETORIA AND DEPARTMENT (AF/S). WE WILL DISTRIBUTE COPIES OF REPORT ITSELF AS REQUESTED IN REFTEL AS SOON AS THEY CAN BE OBTAINED.

2. MAJOR POINTS MADE BY SELECT COMMITTEE ARE:
-BRITISH COMPANIES OPERATING IN SOUTH AFRICA SHOULD AIM TO PAY THEIR AFRICAN WORKERS NOT LESS THAN THE MINIMUM EFFECTIVE LEVEL (MEL) AND SHOULD ESTABLISH A TIMETABLE TO ACHIEVE THIS. THE MEL IS 50 PERCENT ABOVE SUBSISTENCE WAGES.
-BRITISH FIRMS SHOULD BE ASKED TO SUBMIT REGULAR
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REPORTS ON THEIR EMPLOYMENT PRACTICES TO THE DEPART-

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MENT OF TRADE AND INDUSTRY (DTI) WHICH SHOULD
EXERCISE AN ACTIVE MONITORING ROLE.
-BRITISH FIRMS SHOULD AVOID PRACTICES WHICH HINDER
THE DEVELOPMENT OF AFRICAN TRADE UNIONS.
-DETAILED GUIDELINES CONCERNING THE ACTIVITIES OF
BRITISH-OWNED COMPANIES IN SOUTH AFRICA ARE INCLUDED
IN THE REPORT WITH A RECOMMENDATION THAT DTI SHOULD
PUBLISH THEM AND SEND THEM TO EVERY BRITISH FIRM
WITH INTERESTS IN SOUTH AFRICA.

3. SELECT COMMITTEE RECEIVED EVIDENCE FROM 141 COMPANIES INCLUDING 49 OF THE 100 LARGEST COMPANIES IN THE UK. INFORMATION ON EMPLOYMENT PRACTICES OF MANY OF THESE COMPANIES IS INCLUDED IN THE REPORT.

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PRESS COMMENTS, STANDARDS, LABOR LAW, MEETING REPORTS, COMMITTEES, CENTRAL LEGISLATURE, BUSINESS FIRMS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 07 MAR 1974
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: n/a
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01 JAN 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974LONDON02955
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: n/a
From: LONDON
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t19740361/aaaaceur.tel
Line Count: 77
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Office: ACTION AF
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: PRETORIA 0931
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: shawdg
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 08 AUG 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <08-Aug-2002 by elbezefj>; APPROVED <06 DEC 2002 by shawdg>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: PARLIAMENTARY SELECT COMMITTEE REPORT ON LABOR PRACTICES IN SOUTH AFRICA
TAGS: ELAB, UK, SF
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005

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